

## N E W S R E L E A S E

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**Date:** April 4, 2007

**News Release No.:** 07-21

### **\$900,000 in Grants to Prepare California At-Risk Youth for High-Wage Jobs in Growing Industries**

**SACRAMENTO** – Three organizations will receive a total of \$900,000 to fund pre-vocational programs statewide that will prepare at-risk youth to enter career technical training, post-secondary educational programs, apprenticeships, or employment in high wage/high growth jobs.

Able-Disabled Advocacy Inc. in San Diego County, Youth Employment Partnership Inc. in Alameda County, and Orange County were each awarded \$300,000. They were chosen after responding to Workforce Investment Act solicitations for proposals, which were sent to a variety of private, public, and non-profit organizations located throughout California. The three grant recipients will provide pre-vocational training and services focusing on basic academic skills, industry-identified soft skills and career awareness.

"Since taking office I have made the advancement and career technical education programs a priority in my administration because they provide our youth a ticket to quality, high-paying jobs that are important to California's economic future. These grants will help produce the skilled workers business and industry need, while creating tremendous opportunities for young adults who often lack career guidance and assistance," said Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Able-Disabled Advocacy creates a first of its kind program in San Diego County. Working directly with employers in identifying their labor needs, the program helps fill the void by providing youth who are disabled and are in, or transitioning from the juvenile justice system with basic skills. The targeted youth are between the ages of 19-21 and are currently enrolled in school, or have dropped out of school without a diploma. These at-risk youth will receive customized soft-skills training (such as problem solving, work ethics and team work), basic skills upgrading, work-based learning and mentoring.

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The second grant in Alameda County will prepare young women who have left or are in the process of leaving the foster care system; are on parole or probation; are young mothers; are high school dropouts; or are low-income, to enter the high wage/high growth field of construction. Women in the trades will provide valuable mentoring assistance.

The third grant demonstrates a strong partnership with businesses in the top ten industries in Orange County. The project provides career pathways by preparing youth, who are in or are preparing to leave the foster care system, to enter career technical training; post-secondary educational programs; and/or employment in high wage/high growth occupations such as construction and healthcare.

While the training and services funded by these grants will begin on various dates, most projects may begin in April 2007 and continue through December 2008.

These services will be provided with Workforce Investment Act funds drawn from the Governor's 15 Percent portion of the federal Workforce Investment Act. The California Labor and Workforce Development Agency's Employment Development Department exercises oversight authority for the funds and has worked in coordination with the California Workforce Investment Board in providing these grant opportunities.

**LIST OF GRANT RECIPIENTS:**

<b>Grant Recipient</b>	<b>Targeted Industry</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>WIA 15 Percent Award Amount</b>
Able-Disabled Advocacy, Inc.	Business, healthcare, visitor services and construction.	San Diego	\$300,000
Youth Employment Partnership, Inc.	Construction	Alameda	\$300,000
Orange County	Construction, business and professional services, communications, computer technology, construction; defense/aerospace, energy and environment, health services, and tourism.	Orange	\$300,000
<b>Total Funding</b>			<b>\$900,000</b>

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